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DOH-PINELLAS AND BROWARD SERVING AS PILOT COUNTIES DISTRIBUTING COVID-19 VACCINES

The state's pilot project brings Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines to Pinellas and Broward counties with the priority being the most vulnerable residents



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Broward and Pinellas Counties will serve as two of the first Florida counties taking part next week in a COVID-19 vaccination effort that will prioritize Pfizer-BioNTech immunizations for residents of skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) and those who provide their care. This initial distribution of vaccines to protect Florida's most vulnerable residents is expected next week.

Per the [recommendations](#) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), LTCF residents and health care personnel are included in Phase 1 of the [Florida vaccine distribution plan](#).

On Dec. 10, U.S. Food and Drug Administration advisers met to discuss the emergency authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. The third phase of the vaccine's use in test participants demonstrated it was 95 percent effective following two doses.

"The arrival of the first doses of COVID-19 vaccines in Pinellas gives us another way to protect the most vulnerable Pinellas residents and health-care workers who have been hard hit by the pandemic as well as those who provide their care," said Dr. Ulyee Choe, director of the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas). "We are honored to be one of the first two Florida counties to begin the vaccination effort in the state."

"The COVID-19 vaccine is a sign of hope as we address this pandemic in Florida," said Dr. Paula Thaqi, director of the Florida Department of Health in Broward County (DOH-Broward). "We are still encouraging residents and visitors to take common sense precautions to protect themselves from the spread of the virus. These include frequent hand washing, wearing masks, maintaining six feet of social distancing and staying home if you are feeling sick."

As plans are finalized, DOH-Broward and DOH-Pinellas will release more details on the vaccination plan. Paramedic teams will administer the vaccines. COVID-19 vaccines from other manufacturers will be available for use at later dates as supplies reach the state.

Virtual media availabilities will be available from 1 until 1:30 p.m. for each of the counties.

For information about DOH-Broward, go to www.BrowardHealth.gov or follow on Twitter at @FIHealthBroward.

For information about DOH-Pinellas, go to www.PinellasHealth.com or follow on Twitter @HealthyPinellas.

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